

By Senator Bullard

39-01451-16

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing January 21, 2016, as
"Community Action Agency Day" in Florida.

WHEREAS, community action agencies were created to fight the War on Poverty when the federal Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 was signed into law, and

WHEREAS, community action agencies are at the forefront of America's poverty-fighting network with a 52-year history of promoting economic security and self-sufficiency for low-income families, children, and individuals, and

WHEREAS, there are 1,065 community action agencies nationwide, with 27 of those agencies supporting 66 of the 67 counties in this state, and

WHEREAS, in September 2015, the United States Census Bureau American Community Survey reported that 15.5 percent of all Americans, or about 49.4 million persons, were living on incomes below the federal poverty level; that 16.5 percent of Florida's population, slightly more than 3.3 million persons, were living on incomes below the federal poverty level; and that in 2014, Florida ranked 17th nationally in the number of persons living on such limited incomes, and

WHEREAS, in August 2015, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor reported that Florida had a 5.3 percent unemployment rate, which was slightly higher than the national average of 5.1 percent, and

WHEREAS, according to the May 2015 Food Research and Action Center SNAP/Food Stamp Statistics, there were more than 3.6 million Floridians receiving food stamps, and

WHEREAS, according to data released by RealtyTrac in August 2015, Florida ranked fourth in foreclosure rates by state, down from first in the nation in December 2012, and

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33 WHEREAS, to combat these alarming statistics, Florida's
34 community action agencies provided services to 694,225
35 individuals and 271,894 families in 2014; assisted 881 low-
36 income individuals in completing post-secondary education;
37 assisted 1,910 low-income individuals in obtaining preemployment
38 skills; assisted 2,702 unemployed individuals in obtaining
39 employment; assisted 405 employed individuals in increasing
40 their employment income or benefits, or both; and assisted 36
41 low-income persons in purchasing their own homes, and

42 WHEREAS, in 2014, through the initiatives of and with
43 assistance from Florida's community action agencies, 95,479 low-
44 income residents in this state gained employment or obtained
45 assistance to reduce or eliminate barriers to employment; 9,823
46 low-income households achieved an increase in financial assets
47 or financial skills; child and family development was improved
48 for 109,233 infants, children, youth, parents, and other adults;
49 83,882 low-income vulnerable individuals were able to attain
50 secure independent living situations; 102,265 low-income
51 families obtained supports that reduced or eliminated barriers
52 to family stability; 262,624 low-income individuals and families
53 were provided emergency assistance; and with help from other
54 public and private agencies, 343,981 community opportunities or
55 resources were improved or increased for this state's low-income
56 residents, and

57 WHEREAS, in 2014, Florida community action agencies
58 empowered communities by mobilizing 67,508 community members and
59 low-income residents to engage in activities that support and
60 promote their own well-being and that of their communities, and

61 WHEREAS, poverty continues to be an ever more formidable

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62 problem in our communities as a result of the national and
63 global economic crises, and it is fitting to recognize and
64 commend the community action agencies that are at the forefront
65 of the War on Poverty, NOW, THEREFORE,

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67 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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69 That in recognition of the hard work, commitment, and
70 dedication of Florida's community action agencies and their
71 invaluable contributions to the well-being of the low-income
72 residents throughout the state, January 21, 2016, is recognized
73 as "Community Action Agency Day" in Florida.